

A TEPOZTECAN BOOK OF DAYS

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dles are hung with black ribbons and decorated with flowers of black wax. A large incense-burner is lighted, and it and the candlesticks are black too. At eight o'clock food is laid out for each dead. As it is laid out, one says: "*Ye acitihuitz micailhuatl. Canite in-chiaz nomimique*" ("Now comes the Day of the Dead. I will await my departed").¹ 776*
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They offer *tamales*, rice, *mamonés*, chicken, oranges, lemons, bananas, melons, *mole verde*. [262]

All night people keep awake. They pray, and call out the names of the dead. There are torches alight in the streets. The bells on the chapels strike the hours with double strokes. At four o'clock a group of men from each *barrio* go about asking food for the bell-ringers. People give a *tamal* and a dish of *mole*. At six in the morning the blessing is given, mass is said, and the offering is eaten.

November 7.—This is the *octava* of *los chiquitos*. Again the child dead are commemorated, as they were before, only now no meat and no *tamales* are offered, but only bread, milk, *chayotes*, green corn boiled in *tequezquite*, squash, fruit conserve, and *clascales* made in the shape of stars, birds, dogs. [262]

November 8.—On the *octava* of *los grandes* the offering and the vigil are once more repeated. This time fruit and squash are offered to the dead, and *clascales* colored blue. At noon a procession goes to the cemetery, led by the priest. Music accompanies them.

¹ Said in the respectful form (now not generally in use): "*Ye acitihuitz micailhuatl. Canite inmocheiliz nomicatzihuan.*" [195]

164 TEPOZTLAN, A MEXICAN VILLAGE

755 An essential part of the treatment is the conciliation
 782 of the offended spirits. The Nahuatl name for the dis-
 753 ease is *yehyecahuiliztli* ("wind disease"). The word for
 776 "winds" is simply *yehyecame*. But when the spirits
 195 are referred to, they are described with the very re-
 spectful suffix *yehyecatzitzin*. The conciliation consists
 in leaving gifts to *los aires* at the place where these
 spirits became offended, and where, consequently, the
 disease was contracted. It is the *curandera* who ar-
 ranges the gift and takes it to the ravine or washing-
 place. The offering must include *tamales*, and often
 other food and cigarettes. An apparently invariable
 part of the gift is a doll. This is usually locally made,
 of bits of cloth. It should have red cheeks. Some-
 where about it is tied a bit of colored yarn. "*Los aires*
 would not take the gift without this."

I had *los aires* when I was younger. They came because I
 went to Axihla and there I washed my whole body. So *granos*
 came all over my body. See, there are still a few here on my
 hand. My mother went to an *ancianita* and asked her to cure me.
 465 We paid the *ancianita* four pesos and besides we had to pay for
 the gifts to *los aires*. She steeped *alta reina* and *mirto*¹ in a bowl.
 My father smoked a cigarette and mixed the smoke with the
 herbs. Then the *ancianita* washed my body, carefully, with the
 herbs. Then the cigarette was taken out of doors and thrown
 over the house. The herbs were wrapped in cornhusks and
 thrown over the house too. This is always done. Otherwise *los*
aires would come to anyone who might pick up the herbs.

The *ancianita* took the gifts to the water tank at Axihla and
 left them there for *los aires*. She took a doll, two limes, an orange,
 three toys of clay, and four cigarettes tied with yarn. After a
 while I got well.

¹ The herbs just named.

52 / LIFE IN A MEXICAN VILLAGE: Tepoztlán Restudied

554 are the basic factors in social differentiation, while differences in wealth, education,
565 and living standards distinguish individuals but not cohesive social groups.

SEX AND AGE

562 Sex and age differences are the basic factors in the ascription of status and in the structuring of inter-personal relations. Male superiority is accepted as part of the order of things. Women are expected to show deference and respect to men; wives [593] to husbands, sisters to brothers. Sexual differentials are marked in the rearing of children, in the division of labor, and in the privileges and responsibilities of individuals at each stage of the life cycle. Men assume all important leadership roles, economic, political, social, and religious. The double standard in sexual relations is practiced by men, and is generally accepted by women. However, women have comparatively high status; they may own and inherit property, participate in religious life, and as mothers enjoy an important role within the home.

561 The principle of respect for age is second only to that of male superiority. Young people must address older people by the respectful *Vd.*, and in turn are addressed by the more familiar *tú*. The basic age divisions or statuses recognized in the village are five: (1) *criatura* (infant), until about age two or weaning time; (2) *niño* [192] (child), from two to about twelve; (3) *jóvenes, muchacho, muchacha, or señorita*, from about twelve until marriage; (4) *adulto or hombre (man) and mujer (woman)*, from marriage in the case of a man, and after having one or two children in the case of a young married girl; (5) *anciano or viejo* (the aged).

858 The infant status is by far the most privileged. Infants get a great deal of attention and care. Notwithstanding the widespread preference for boys, there are practically no sexual differentials in the treatment accorded infants.

[856] The child status is an extended one, and the development of the child is viewed as a slow process which must not be unduly hurried. In the early years the child is [867] expected to learn the all-important virtues of obedience and respect for parents, [868] older siblings, and other adults. Responsibilities and work are assumed earlier by girls than by boys, but in both cases it is generally gradual. Nevertheless, the period of childhood is a relatively difficult one. It is a time when punishments are given, when play must be gradually restricted and finally eliminated. It is also the period of greatest demands and least rewards.

882 The period of youth is the time when both boys and girls assume adult work roles. They are not viewed as adults, however, and do their work under the supervision of their parents. The sexual differentials in this stage are very sharp, and boys have much more personal freedom than girls. This period of youth is generally longer for boys than girls, since the latter marry earlier. Young men, however, may not hold public office or be entrusted with positions of responsibility in the barrio.

121 tive modes of life and cultural expressions corresponding to them, that draws class apart from class, gives cohesion to each class and stratifies a whole society." Cf. Robert M. MacIver and Charles H. Page, *Society* (New York: Rinehart and Co., Inc., 1949), p. 349. It will become apparent to the reader that Tepoztlán has no classes in the above sense. However, in terms of 554 the Warner approach, many classes and subclasses might be found in Tepoztlán.
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Status Distinctions and Family Organization / 53

The *adultos* consist of married adults and heads of families. Marriage is important as initiating the adult status, and it is the most productive one for both men and women. The adults are the most important group both economically and politically and they run the society. If adult males carry most of the responsibilities, they also enjoy many privileges. They may smoke and drink, have affairs with women, beat their wives, and otherwise exercise male prerogatives. These prerogatives are not supposed to apply to unmarried youths, but when young men begin to get drunk and run around with women, it is said that they "are becoming men."

The status of the aged is, theoretically, one of great respect. Old men and women can address anyone in the familiar *tú* and in return are to be addressed by *Vd.* But sometimes the more endearing *abuelito* or *papacito* is used. To contradict an *anciano* and certainly to beat an old man is an outrage; "it is like beating your own father." The status of the aged, however, is by no means an enviable one, particularly when old people can no longer support themselves. Children are supposed to support aged parents but there are cases of extreme neglect and the theme, "I would rather die than depend upon my children" is frequently heard. The old people do not take part in politics and in general do not have positions of leadership. Because of the rapidly changing culture, the *ancianos* are out of step with the times. Many speak Spanish poorly and have difficulty even in communicating with their grandchildren. In some cases the younger generation, particularly those who have been away to school, are embarrassed by the old-fashioned dress, speech, and manners of their grandparents.

RACE

Race is not an important factor in status in Tepoztlán, and racial prejudice hardly exists. Although Tepoztecos are quite sensitive to color differences, there are no distinct racial groups as such recognized in the village. The three distinctions most commonly made are *blanco*, *prieto*, and *indio*. The *blancos* are those with light skin and light eyes, characteristics which are definitely favored. The *prietos* are those with dark skin. The term *indio* has various connotations. Sometimes it is used as the equivalent of *campesino* as opposed to the city man; thus it may be said, "Here in Tepoztlán we are all *indios* and we get along on very little, whereas the city people are very demanding." At other times the word *indio* is used to designate low socio-cultural status, "el pobre, como es indito, no sabe ni siquiera hablar bien" (because the poor thing is Indian he can't even speak well). In this sense, many refer to the inhabitants of the smaller and poorer barrios of San Pedro, Los Reyes, and San Sebastián as *indios*. *Indio* is also used as a term of criticism in reference to one who has poor self-control and is capable of violence. Thus Tepoztecos will say, "In Amatlán they are very Indian; if one is not careful he may be assassinated."

Basically, the term "Indian" is used to designate social status rather than physical type. A wealthy dark person who dresses in city style may not be considered *blanco* but neither will he be called *indio*. On the other hand, a rich person who continues

54 / LIFE IN A MEXICAN VILLAGE: *Tepoztlán Restudied*

563 to dress in the white *calzones* and huaraches like most Tepoztecs, may be called
 [196] "un indio platudo," a wealthy Indian, or literally "a silvered Indian." Thus, the
 [554] residents of Gabriel Mariaca are often described as "esos inditos tienen harta lana, son platudos."

• [195] The term *negro* or *negra* is sometimes used as a term of abuse. An irate husband
 may call his wife *negra* or *cabibuca* if she is a shade darker than he. But similarly,
 he may call her *gringa*, if she is somewhat lighter; both terms are intended as insults.

[578] Many of the sons and daughters of the old *cacique* families seem to be lighter
 [565] than the rest of the population, suggesting that the *caciques* of the Díaz epoch may
 have had a stronger admixture of Spanish blood than did the rest of the popula-
 tion. However, groupings do not run along racial lines. About an equal sprinkling
 of light-skinned people is found among the rich and poor, the *cultos*, the *ignorantes*,
 etc.

WEALTH

556 The concepts of rich and poor are frequently used designations of social status in
 Tepoztlán. But the terms are used in a relative way, are not easily defined, and are
 applied, as a rule, to individuals rather than to groups. All Tepoztecs tend to
 characterize themselves as poor, and there is no ostentatious display of wealth on
 the part of the rich. Concealing wealth is a deep-seated trait, done to avoid envy,
 claims of friends, taxes, and contributions to the church and public affairs. This at-
 titude tends to limit the function of wealth as a factor for social differentiation. And,
 by and large, the rich in Tepoztlán are not easily distinguishable from the poor.

[464] Both rich and poor work the land dressed in the same white *calzones* and
 huaraches; both rich and poor hire day laborers when necessary; and men who own
 property, as well as those who do not, hire themselves out as laborers when cash is
 needed. Many of the present-day rich families were once poor, and they cling to the
 habits of hard work and frugality with which they improved their economic status.
 However, in varying degrees the rich have a higher standard of living than the
 poor and can be said to eat better, dress better, and live in more comfortable and
 better equipped homes. But a man's wealth is not judged by the way in which he
 lives; rather it is estimated in the amount of land, cattle, plow-oxen, and money he
 has.

In general there is no sharp social distance between the rich and poor, although
 there is much sensitivity and awareness of differences in economic status. People
 in Tepoztlán prefer the company of their equals or inferiors, rather than those who
 are in a superior economic status. But although a rich man may explain the poverty
 of a neighbor in terms of his being backward and ignorant, he will treat him with
 due respect.

LAND-OWNERSHIP

423 The expression, "He has many lands" (land parcels) is the simplest way the
 556 Tepoztecán has of designating wealth and high social status. Conversely, when one

The Quality of Inter-Personal Relations / 193

romantic undertakings, and in fiestas. The *cuate* is not expected to aid in domestic or economic difficulties, although he may do so. The *cuate* relationship is frequently stabilized and formalized after marriage by being turned into a *compadre* relationship at the birth of a *cuate's* child. In this way, a comparatively intimate alliance is short lived and gives way to a more formal respect-relationship. 156
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There is a great deal of hostility in inter-personal relations in Tepoztlán. But much of this hostility is suppressed, or expressed indirectly in the form of malicious gossip, stealing, secretive destruction of property, ridicule, deprecation and envy, and sorcery. [571]
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A particularly interesting example of the Tepoztecan attitude that aggression in inter-personal relations should not be expressed directly is the widespread use of *indirectas*, which are criticisms indirectly expressed. These take various forms such as criticism by allusion, self-deprecation, use of the diminutive in a cutting way, and belittlement. Whenever these are used, it is immediately understood that insult is intended. For example, one man addressing another who had boasted of being the undisputed head of his household, said, "I don't rule in my house but everything is in order. Others say they are very manly, but if they only knew enough to look around they would find their wife with another man." 195
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The following conversation between two women further illustrates the *indirecta*. The first woman is a prosperous storekeeper who is very pious but whose children have turned out "bad," according to other villagers. Recently, one of her daughters was almost dragged off by her sweetheart, but she managed to escape leaving him holding her *rebozo*. The second woman in this conversation is the wife of a prosperous farmer and is known to be ambitious to educate her children. Three of them have scholarships and are studying at a public school to become school teachers.

The first woman said, "I will educate my daughters but not for four years like other people so that they can come here and get jobs as little teachers."

The second woman answered, "The rich can send their children to the best schools. We are poor and cannot afford it. I hope God helps you in all you desire."

First woman, continuing, "And I won't let my daughter work like some because it is dangerous for a girl to be away from her parents."

Thereupon the second woman said, "As much as people guard their daughters I notice that they elope or have their *rebozos* taken from them. Some people swallow saints and defecate devils."

Other examples of common *indirectas* are: "They are a little rich and now have a little calf, but before, they knew how to steal." "They say they eat very well, but I notice that they are as skinny as I." Another type of *indirecta* is the generalization meant to apply to someone present. For example, a young school teacher who took pride in wearing stylish clothing appeared one day in a new-style skirt. She joined a group of other teachers, whereupon one of them said loudly that she heartily disliked the new styles and would not wear one of them for anything. The young girl turned pale and immediately left the group.

The Quality of Inter-Personal Relations / 197

ing the individual is becoming more and more limited, it still offers a relative degree of security, especially in times of serious trouble.

In a more vague way; there is also a certain amount of security felt within the barrio and within the village as a whole in comparison to the world outside. The consciousness of Tepoztecan of being in a position of relative power and superiority over the rest of the municipio has made for local pride and a feeling of unity which also foster a sense of individual security. In contrast, the population of the surrounding villages suffers from a chronic feeling of injustice and exploitation at the hands of the village of Tepoztlán.

Tepoztecan also seek security through privacy. The withdrawal and personal detachment noted earlier, as well as a fear of intimacy, are characteristic of a majority of Tepoztecan. The man who speaks little, keeps his affairs to himself, and maintains some distance between himself and others has less chance of creating enemies or of being criticized or envied. A man does not generally discuss his plans to buy or sell or take a trip, except with persons who are directly concerned. A woman does not customarily tell a neighbor or even a relative that she is going to have a baby or make a new dress or prepare something special for dinner.

If an accident occurs to another's property, few hasten to inform the owner, who may not discover it until it is a total loss. In one case, a widow's pig was killed by a bus. Although it was known that she was the owner, no one told her about the accident. By the time she learned of it, most of the meat had been cut away by nearby residents, and she was left with only the head and tail.

There is greater readiness to commiserate in another's misfortune than to take joy in his success, resulting in a more widespread sharing of bad news than good. There is an almost secretive attitude toward good fortune, and boasting is at a minimum. People in Tepoztlán do not ordinarily advise each other where a good purchase or sale is to be made, how an animal can be cured, or in what ways a crop may be improved. Articles and market baskets carried through the streets are kept carefully covered from prying eyes. Although matters of illness and health are often a topic of conversation, there is reluctance to recommend a good remedy or *curendero*. In general, there is an absence of altruism, generosity, charity, and the spirit of sharing. Doing favors for others is rare and creates suspicion. Favors are generally associated with people *de cultura* who, it is said, do favors to get favor.

When young people or children show kindness or pity to outsiders they are frequently "corrected" by their mothers. Children are scolded for giving things to their friends or for being trusting and generous in lending articles to persons outside the family. Children or others who expect sympathy and help are called fools and are derided. It is attitudes such as these which daily reinforce the Tepoztecán's harsh view of life and throw him upon his own resources.

Security is sought through respect and the extension of respect-relationships. By respect, Tepoztecan mean an appreciation or recognition of high status as demonstrated by the use of the respectful *Vd.*, by the avoidance of intimacy or undue familiarity, joking, and discussions of sex or other subjects of intimate nature. A

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298 / LIFE IN A MEXICAN VILLAGE: Tepoztlán Restudied

554 person in a respect status has certain powers, authority, and privileges and at the
 571 same time may not be insulted, criticized, or attacked. Respect status may stem
 576 from superior social and economic position, advanced age, education, or political
 195 power. Respect status may also stem from a specific, formal respect-relationship
 established between two individuals, such as that between parents and children,
 in-laws, and *compadres*. All inter-personal relations fall into three respect categories,
 that of reciprocal respect in which both parties address each other in *Vd.*, that of
 superior-subordinate respect-relations in which one party is addressed in *Vd.* and
 the other in the familiar *tú*, and the intimate relation in which both parties address
 each other in *tú*.

The *Vd.-Vd.* relation of mutual respect is perhaps the safest and therefore the
 ideal relationship in Tepoztlán. It implies recognition of equality of status, and
 each party is guaranteed respectful behavior and the fulfillment of certain formal
 obligations by the other. It involves no further intimacy or personal compromise
 and emphasizes mutual reserve and constraint, which well suits the Tepoztecan
 temperament. This relationship is however the least frequent in Tepoztlán, being
 [608] limited to *compadres*, *consuegros* (the respective parents of married couples), and
 [593] adults who are strangers to one another. Very rarely, a husband and wife may
 maintain an *Vd.-Vd.* relationship indicating the highest degree of mutual respect.

Some of the more ambitious younger people in the village now seek to establish
 [555] an *Vd.-Vd.* relationship between themselves and older people on the basis of supe-
 [178] rior education or professional standing. Thus, a young man or woman who is a
 teacher desires to be addressed respectfully rather than familiarly by the parents
 of his pupils, partly to maintain authority and partly to obtain recognition of per-
 sonal achievement. In this sense there is a present trend to extend the number of
Vd.-Vd. relationships and to approach more nearly the situation which occurs in
 the cities.

The *Vd.-tú* relationship establishes a clear-cut status differentiation in terms of
 superordinate-subordinate. For the person in the dominant position, this is the
 most satisfying and preferred relationship. With the exception of the possibility of
 insubordination or hostility on the part of the submissive individual, this respect
 [571] status is a very secure one. Age and relative social position are the essential deter-
 minants in the use of *Vd.-tú*. All children are addressed in *tú*, and all persons use
Vd. when speaking to someone older than themselves. Thus, one is in an *Vd.-tú*
 [602] relationship with parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, older brothers and sisters,
 cousins, and all older non-relatives.

The respect of children for parents and older relatives is traditionally expressed
 [593] by kissing their hands in greeting and each evening when the church bell rings.
 [178] This practice is dying out and only rarely occurs in the presence of a stranger. In
 many families there is also resistance to addressing older brothers and sisters in *Vd.*
 and to giving them the respect and obedience that should accompany it. The num-
 ber of cases in which children address parents in the familiar form is rapidly in-
 creasing. In the recent past, when there was a greater age differential between

The Quality of Inter-Personal Relations 299

husbands and wives, a young wife often addressed her older husband in *Vd.*, while he used *tú* to her.

The *Vd.-tú* relationship may also exist between employer and employee, particularly if the latter is younger and is well known to the employer. However, if an employer addresses an older employee in the familiar form, it is a sign of lack of respect and is taken to be an insult. When both persons are of the same age and are not strangers, they address each other in the familiar form.

In pre-Revolutionary days it was customary for wealthy *caciques* to address the rest of the population as *tú*, regardless of age, and to be addressed as *Vd.* Today, wealth plays a minimal role in the *Vd.-tú* relationship, in part because of the absence of sharp class differences, in part because of the humble origins of many of the present well-to-do. The memory of the deep hostility and fierce vengeance of the subordinate population toward the *caciques* is also a deterrent in taking advantage of higher economic status.

Men holding political office or political ambitions are generally careful to avoid the *Vd.-tú* relationship with other adults for fear of offending. They prefer the *Vd.-Vd.* relationship, for they seek many *compadres*, or the *tú-tú* relationship in which they acknowledge friendship or acquaintance with most people of their own age group. However, local officials tend to speak condescendingly in the *Vd.-tú* relationship to more humble Tepoztecanas, as well as to people from outlying villages, regardless of their age. This attitude of arrogance on the part of the officials and respect for the authorities on the part of the general population is carried over from pre-Revolutionary days, as is the notion that to speak to the local president in the familiar *tú* adds to an individual's importance. However, within Tepoztlán proper, officials no longer dare to express superiority of status to the majority of the adult inhabitants. Only the priest and nuns maintain an *Vd.-tú* relationship with the rest of the population.

The *tú-tú* relationship is an intimate one and is used between husband and wife, sweethearts, and children. It is also used between two people of the same sex and of approximately the same age. However, in Tepoztlán this *tú-tú* relationship does not always imply intimacy, but rather the possibility of intimacy. Thus, it is from the same age group that the *cuates*, drinking companions, singing companions, and so on, are drawn; but for the rest, the *tú-tú* relationship may be almost as reserved and formal as *Vd.-Vd.* In this, Tepoztlán and other rural villages differ from the city where the use of *tú-tú* is reserved for only the most intimate friends, all others of the same age being addressed as *Vd.*

At least among the school children and older students there is a tendency toward urban usage of *tú* and *Vd.*, that is, the custom of having fewer but more intimate *tú* relationships and a greater number of *Vd.* relationships. Traditionally in Tepoztlán, although members of the same sex and age group continue to call each other *tú*, there is a marked withdrawal from intimate relations as they get older and particularly after marriage. The *tú-tú* relationship is undoubtedly a potentially dangerous one to continue, because of the equality of status and the possibility of

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195 300 / LIFE IN A MEXICAN VILLAGE: *Tepoztlán Restudied*

554 familiarity, joking, ridicule, insult, or attack. Although the *Vd.-Vd* relationship
 571 also implies equality of status, it is by no means the same psychologically, since both
 576 parties extend reciprocal respect.

477 In the light of the individualism of Tepoztecos, a great deal of competition in
 185 inter-personal relations might be supposed. But this is not the case. Tepoztlán is
 [157] not a competitive society.⁷ Accordingly, a lack of strong drive and ambition for
 self-improvement and a lack of initiative and originality are notable. Most adults
 tend to be self-satisfied if they have enough food and clothing from harvest to
 harvest. Among the young people, too, there is a general acceptance of the way of
 life; young men wish to be farmers as their fathers are, and most young girls con-
 tinue to work at home and serve their elders. The rewards they seek are not im-
 possible of achievement: occasional new clothes, shoes, a sweetheart, freedom to
 attend fiestas, and ultimately to marry, with some parental help.

185 Most married adults find sufficient reward in their growing children, who by
 593 their obedience and labor little by little lighten the burden of the parents and give
 some promise of protection for their parents' old age. (See Fig. 51.) There is almost
 no pressure upon the parents by the children in the form of demands for material
 comforts or for independence. Even parents who do not provide minimum neces-
 sities for health and comfort, or who are lazy or who drink, do not lose their
 authoritative position or their right to respect. Few Tepoztecan parents feel inade-
 quate or a failure for not providing well or advancing economically. Insubordina-
 tion on the part of the children would have a far more shaking effect than chronic
 poverty upon parental esteem.

185 There is a relative absence of concern for the future. Only the minority, who
 593 recognize education as an important source of security, save in advance for the
 education of a son or daughter. It is among these families that self-denial in the
 present, in order to gain future reward, is encountered—a familiar pattern among
 the urban middle class. The rest of the population exercise general thrift, but it can
 [454] best be characterized as spending when there is money and pulling in their belts
 when there is none. The absence of saving "for a rainy day" or for a "nest egg" is
 striking.

[584] Young people planning marriage do not save in anticipation of their many needs;
 they marry at short notice, as soon as there is money to pay for the wedding, the
 money being supplied by the boy's parents from the sale of an animal, by borrow-
 ing, or sometimes by the boy's going to work for a few months until the money is
 raised. Again, when a child is expected, there is no saving in anticipation of its

⁷ Though competition occurs in Tepoztlán it is generally between groups rather than between individuals and, for the most part, is limited to social rather than economic activities in which prestige rather than material gain is at stake.

[578] It is interesting to note that in recent years the introduction of certain forms of competition has had disastrous effects. The violence, murder, and bitterness which have grown out of the new competitive enterprise, such as the two bus lines, and the inter-village competition in the communal forest resources for the commercial production of charcoal, suggest that Tepoztecos were quite unprepared for such innovations.

Inter-Personal Relations Within the Family 351

As the couple grow older, the husband may make the selection, and often friendship, rather than higher economic status, dictates the choice.

Godparents address their godchildren in the familiar *tú* and are addressed in turn by the respectful *Vd.* Traditionally, the godchild had to kiss the godparent's hand at each meeting, but this is no longer common. It is customary for the godparent to offer the child a few centavos upon meeting. But the obligations of the godparent are many. They must assist at the baptism, purchase the child's clothing for the occasion, and pay the fee to the priest. They also accompany the mother and child to the *sacmisa*, or first Mass, which should take place forty days after the birth of the child. If the infant dies they arrange for the wake, dress the child appropriately for burial, and contribute to the expenses of the musicians at the funeral. One of the obligations of the godparent is to urge their *compadres* to send the child to school. If the child learns bad habits or otherwise needs correction, the parents may call upon the godparents to scold the child.

The godparents of confirmation are generally selected by the godparents of baptism, and occasionally the latter may accept both roles. The godparents of marriage are also important figures. One of their functions is to act as mediators between the couple, in case of quarrels or separations.

One of the distinctive aspects of the *compadre* system in Tepoztlán, and in Mexico as a whole, is the way in which the godparent relationship has been extended far beyond the original Catholic forms. In most of Spain there are only two or three types of godparents, popularly those of baptism, communion, and confirmation. Not so in Tepoztlán. In addition to the types mentioned above, Tepoztecans also have the following: *padrino de miscoton*,^a *padrino de medida o listón*,^b *padrino de evangelio*,^c *padrino de escapulario*, *padrino del niño Jesús*, and others. It would seem that Tepoztecans have utilized every possibility for extending the godparent relationship. This may be a reflection of their seeking security through the extension of ceremonial kinship, for in most of the above cases a *compadre* relationship is formed.

The godparent system has also been extended to secular activities. At soccer and basketball games in the village, each team has its godmother who dresses in white, carries flowers, and acts as the sponsor of the team, handing out the prizes to the winners. At social dances there are also godmothers who act as chaperones for the young people.

Compadres address each other with the respectful *Vd.* and avoid intimacies. They may not drink together, discuss sexual matters, or tell dirty jokes. It is a respectful relationship and in this lies its strength. *Compadres* will often exchange favors, and

^a The term *miscoton* is Náhuatl and refers to a small sweater which the godparent places on the godchild as a protection against illness.

^b The *medida o listón* refers to a small piece of ribbon which has been blessed by the priest and is placed on a sick child as a charm against evil.

^c This godparent is also chosen for a child who is ill. A woman of the world is preferred, a woman with a "hard heart." By going to church and saying a prayer, she becomes the child's godmother.

354 / LIFE IN A MEXICAN VILLAGE: *Tepoztlán Restudied*

842 tion, although very secretive, is not uncommon, and it is said that many women
[847] take medicine to make themselves sterile.

[593] In sharp contrast to women, men in Tepoztlán prefer large families and are outspoken in their desire to have many sons to help them. In many husband-wife relations there is an underlying struggle in which the wife tries to limit the number of pregnancies against the protests of her husband. If conception does not take place within a reasonable length of time, husbands may suspect their wives of taking medicine to prevent it. Failure to conceive may be sufficient cause for abandonment, and in the few cases in which women were known to have prayed for a child the motive almost always was to please the husband. Men show little interest in learning methods of birth control, and it is highly improbable that many husbands would practice it or permit their wives to.

[582] The differences in the attitudes of men and women toward having children stem from several factors. Men often marry at a more mature age and when they feel ready for marriage, but girls marry quite young, and often as a result of pressure [581] from their suitors or their parents or because of pregnancy. Men frequently marry for the purpose of raising a family; women, except when they are pregnant, usually marry for motives entirely unrelated to having children. Unlike women, who become more dependent upon their mother-in-law and husband at the birth of a child, men acquire a new independence and a more respected status as *padre de familia*. Becoming a mother does not in itself improve a woman's status, nor is there [562] any perceptible change in the treatment of wives during pregnancy. As one informant put it, "A good husband will continue to be good when his wife is pregnant, and a bad one will continue to beat her." [843]

[462] The strict division of labor in Tepoztecan homes, in which the burden of the care of the children in sickness and in health falls upon the mother, is often given [594] as an explanation of the different attitudes of men and women toward having children. "It makes no difference to the men how many children there are. It is the wife who has to see that there is enough for all."

842 Motherhood is not glorified in Tepoztlán. The prevailing prudishness toward sex, as well as the reciprocal respect-relations between parents and children, results in the avoidance of the subject. Most Tepoztecan girls grow up in an atmosphere 155 in which negative attitudes of fear and shame toward motherhood, pregnancy, and 864 even marriage have more opportunity of developing than positive ones. Despite the early assumption of the care of small children and household duties, there is an absence of positive psychological preparation in the training of young girls for the acceptance of motherhood. This is reenforced by the martyr-like attitude of their own mothers toward husbands and children.

842 PREGNANCY

[195] The most common expression to describe pregnancy is "to become ill with child."² Sterility (*yomitziili*) is thought to be due to "cold" in the womb,² and massages

² Sterility is also explained by "cold" in Chan Kom. *Ibid.* p. 181.

[843]
[171]

Infancy and Early Childhood / 377

Most families attempt to console the child during weaning. He generally receives more attention from his mother and continues to sleep with her. However, most mothers do not carry the child during weaning because of the pain in their breasts. The child is generally carried about by others in the family, is given little toys or goodies, and is taken visiting. The child starts to eat with the family, and this is often presented to him as a compensation for the loss of the mother's milk and usually serves to divert him. Occasionally, if a child is inconsolable and cries hard for a long time, particularly at night, the mother, or more usually the father, will lose patience and spank him hard and then frighten him into silence by telling him the coyote will come to eat him. Sometimes a child will be taken to sleep at his grandmother's house for a few nights. [825]

Illness and death are frequent in children after weaning. Often the illness or death is attributed to indigestion or *élica* (tuberculosis?), in which the child wastes away. These are associated with the changed diet of the child at weaning, and it is highly probable that these children do not receive sufficient nourishment, or are given foods unsuited to the digestive systems of young children. Many women wean *con pura tortilla*, that is, with inadequate food substitutes. These children are shifted to the diet of the adult, which consists of tortilla, beans or bean soup, rice or noodles prepared with much lard or oil, and black coffee. In some families children of two are also permitted to eat chile and various local seeds which, whether toasted or raw, are difficult to digest. The best traditional method of feeding a weaned child is to give him an *atole* of ground corn cooked in milk, if the family can afford it, or in water, and sweetened with cinnamon and brown sugar. Many women say that children never become ill if given this food daily for one, two, or six months after weaning. Today better-to-do and more acculturated families wean with a daily diet of eggs, cereals, milk, soups made of chicken or meat, and vegetables and fruit, in addition to the traditional foods. Sometimes cooked meat and bread are given to a small child; even when the rest of the family cannot afford to eat them. This diet, however, is limited to very few children. [165] 262 862

Chipiles, or jealousy, is an important childhood illness which begins when the mother of the child again becomes pregnant.* The word *chipil* (jealous) is derived from the Náhuatl *tsipil* which means last or smallest one and refers to the jealousy of the youngest child toward the expected baby. It is believed that nursing children can tell from the taste of the pregnant mother's milk that a new child is coming, and the illness is due to the fact that they are now "carrying the weight of the baby," a euphemistic term for jealousy. Weaning is begun with the first display of symptoms. Children who are no longer being nursed but who still sleep with the mother are able to "sense" the coming of another child and may also become *chipil*. Young husbands are also subject to *chipiles* when their wives become pregnant for the first time. They also are "carrying the weight of the baby," since there is no other child to do so. The symptoms of *chipiles* are pain all over the [195] 753 862 [843]

* This illness is well known in many parts of Mexico, including the large cities, but, to my knowledge, it has not been reported in anthropological literature. [171]

400 / LIFE IN A MEXICAN VILLAGE: *Tepoztlán Restudied*

Drinking to

bolster up their courage is common among boys setting out to court a girl. A boy may admire a girl from a distance for several weeks or months without declaring himself, or he will try to get her attention by staring hard at her (*echar el ojo castigado*).² (See Fig. 59.) If she notices it and smiles, he is encouraged to proceed

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Fig. 59. A Tepoztecan boy trying to get a girl's attention by staring at her.

with the courting. Some few do not approach a girl themselves but do so through a go-between. Boys whose attentions are refused have been known to get drunk for days because of the humiliation. Occasionally a boy who is spurned will revenge himself by attacking the girl with the help of friends. A boy who has received encouragement from a girl in the form of smiles and direct glances and is subsequently rejected by her is especially outraged and feels justified in forcing himself upon her. Girls do not experience the tension and fear of rejection involved in initiating courtship, but they do fear revenge and must be very guarded in their manner with boys. The occasional girl who smiles directly at a boy, or gives him meaningful glances, has almost always set her heart upon him and is quite ready to accept him as a *novio*. Encouragement as open as this is usually successful, for it is a rare boy or man in Tepoztlán who would resist an easy conquest.

The first step in courting is to send the girl a letter declaring love. Occasionally, before writing, a youth may approach a girl in the street and detain her (*atajarla*)

² Other expressions used to describe a boy's flirting are *echar vidrio* and *están dándole un gallo la novia*.

[273]

Adolescence, Courtship, and Marriage / 401

and say, "*Señorita*, may I accompany you for a moment?" If the girl consents, he will at once propose that they be *novios*, and he then will begin to send her love letters. This approach is recent and is limited to those with more education or contact with the outside, or to those with courage enough to face a possible refusal or scolding from the girl. The writing of love letters is no longer limited to a few but has become widespread with increasing literacy. Young people who are unable to write well ask a friend with more education to do it for them. Girls and boys who have been to secondary school are particularly sought out as letter writers, and they derive a great deal of prestige in this way. The letters are written in flowery style and are usually copied out of a book of etiquette. A typical letter is the following:

Adored Señorita:

The impulses of my heart are such that they encourage even the most cautious man to commit indiscretion which sooner or later he will regret. Perhaps this will not happen to me in taking the liberty of writing this letter. My feelings are such that I am taking the liberty in order to ascertain my coming fate, pending the day when you honor me with your affirmative or negative response.

My soul is carried to the extreme in manifesting in exaggerated phrases, which are lacking in substance and sound, the love that you inspire. But do not think that because of this I do not feel a true passion for your incomparable beauty and goodness. The proof is that, despite the fear that my petition will be denied, I tremulously write this declaration and anxiously await the result, hoping that my love will be required.

Favor me, Señorita, and attend my entreaty; and if, unutterable words, you feel a little sympathy toward one so audacious as to love you tenderly, communicate with me quickly and in all sincerity.

With all the sentiment which invades the heart of your respectful and constant adorer.

Your devoted servant,

A boy may send two or three such letters anonymously before he has the courage to affix his name. If a favorable reply is received, the boy arranges for a meeting. Any answer but an outright refusal is taken to be favorable; when a girl asks for time to think it over, a boy considers her his *novia*. It is a common sight to see a young boy loitering at a street corner for hours, waiting for an opportunity to get a glimpse of his *novia* or to say a few words to her. (See Fig. 60.) This "cornering" a girl (*esquiniar la muchacha*) is a regular courting practice in Tepoztlán. At night boys often gather at a corner to play the guitar and serenade a nearby *novia* of one of the group. A typical song is as follows:

I come to greet you
With this serenade of love.
May you have no trouble,
My charming angel.

Your laughter or your fear
Will tell me of your feelings.
I am your faithful lover
And adore you always.

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402 / LIFE IN A MEXICAN VILLAGE: *Tepoztlán Restudied*

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There are enough flowers in my heart
To make a bouquet for you.
I shall be happy and you will have no trouble
When you enjoy my love.

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Novios continue to write letters to one another because of the difficulty of getting together. There is, of course, much secrecy involved in the sending of letters. Many *novios* have a secret place to leave letters, or they may be delivered by a trusted friend or by a child hired for the purpose. Sometimes *novios* deliver letters to one another in passing. Some widows and girls are known to hire themselves for the purpose of delivering messages for lovers, to patch up quarrels, or

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Fig. 60. A boy waiting hopefully at the plaza for a glimpse of his *novia*.

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to convince a girl to become someone's *novia*. These women are known as *alcabueras*. Another term for them is *corre-ve-y-dile* (run-see-and-tell). Both of these are insulting terms, and such go-betweens are strongly disapproved of; they are also suspected of knowing sorcery especially appropriate for *novios*.

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Meetings between *novios* may take place at the fountain (Fig. 61), in the corral of the girl's house after dark, or in a deserted spot in the daytime, always with much apprehension about being discovered. If they are *novios* for the first time, acquaintanceship generally develops slowly. *Novios* generally caress and embrace but rarely kiss. Kissing is a modern innovation in courtship, and only the more sophisticated *novios* do so. Kissing is traditionally associated with religious worship,

404 / LIFE IN A MEXICAN VILLAGE: *Tepoztlán Restudied*

584 lot." I answered, "No." "Well," she said, "if I were a man I would have three *novias* at a time." "But I can't support a woman," I answered. "Well, let her support you," she said. I consulted my friends and told them of the conversation. They urged me on. Once I got up enough courage to tell the girl I loved her. I already had sexual desires, but I didn't know how to act or talk. I don't recall the year, but it was in 1915 or 1916 when one day in June I told her I liked her. On the day before the barrio fiesta, on August 5, she said to me, "Where have you been that I haven't seen you?" I asked to meet her and said I wanted to talk to her. She agreed to meet me that night. I threw little stones in the darkness to tell her I could come out. She told me to meet her behind the house. The night was pitch black, and there was a little drizzle. I began to make little noises to tell her where I was. I moved the little twigs. When she arrived I got the chills. She stopped about three feet in front of me and said, "Well, here I am, what did you want to talk about?" I didn't know what to say so I said, "Do you or don't you want to marry me?" "But I am older than you, perhaps your folks won't want you to." We were about two feet apart. "Come closer," I said, and I grabbed her and drew her under my serape. And then I got more chills. "What's the matter with you?" she said. "Do you have malaria?" Finally, I said, "Let us lie down here." She said no, and I said yes. It was yes, no, yes, no, until finally at about 3:00 A.M. we heard the *chirimía*, and since her father was to get up soon, she left and nothing happened. The next day, I saw her and she laughed at me. I told my friends what happened. They called me a fool and said, "Why did you just talk and talk instead of grab her and throw her down?" I never got beyond the *novio* stage. I never really got her. She had a serious lover who wanted to marry her. Once he asked me not to continue talking to her, and he threatened me. He was twenty, and I was fifteen, and I was very thin. Soon after that I bought a knife and always carried it with me for protection.

Being *novios* does not always mean that a boy and girl will marry. In the past, when a girl accepted a *novio* she usually expected him to become her husband. Today it is common to have several *novios* before marriage, and some girls and boys have several *novios* simultaneously, a practice which is considered dishonorable. A girl who has many *novios* is called *loca*, and a boy who has many *novias* is called *muy enamorado*. Boys often court girls for the purpose of having sexual relations and then abandon them.

832 584 Many young men resort to love magic when they have difficulty in courting a girl. The most common procedure is to use a powder made of crushed human skull bones. This powder is to be placed in the girl's right hand, in her hair, or in a sweet drink. Once this is done, it is believed the girl will begin to love the boy and miss him. Some men in Tepoztlán, and in other parts of Mexico, believe that the leg of a beetle placed in a girl's soda drink will get her very *loca* and make her desire sexual relations. Care is taken not to use too large a dose. The following story was told to illustrate what can happen when an overdose is given.

A youth of twenty-four liked a girl very much and decided to "corner" her and speak to her, but she insulted him. This happened three times. He still wanted her. A friend advised him to get some magical skull powder and put it into a drink for her. He did this but gave her too large a dose. Then the girl began to feel so much desire for him that

old age and death: 19

IN TEPOZTLÁN a person is thought to be old when he can no longer do his customary work because of physical weakness or when he is obviously gray, wrinkled, and bent with age.¹ This is equally true of women. The menopause is not taken as a sign of old age; women generally welcome it because they will no longer be able to bear children. There is no custom of retiring to a life of rest and leisure; everyone works as long as he is able. (See Fig. 63.) The habit of useful activity keeps old people from becoming a burden to their children or a "social problem." Children are expected to care for old parents and the majority do, but many old people prefer to live alone, even at a miserable subsistence level.² 886 888

Old age as such is not feared, but dependence upon others and inability to work are generally very much feared. (See Fig. 64.) A "useless" old age is considered a sad thing, and many would prefer death. Chronic or lingering illness is not a serious problem because old people continue to work until their illness becomes acute, and death quickly follows. There are relatively few individuals who are bedridden or severely disabled because of their advanced years. [164]

Old age is traditionally the time when a Tepoztecan receives greatest respect and consideration. Men over fifty are not required to do guard duty, and old people are permitted greater freedom of speech and behavior. They may get drunk, insult others, use sexual terms, laugh and cry, and even urinate in public without censure, although younger people may find it embarrassing. On the whole, however, old people are as restrained in behavior as other adults.

It appears to be the consensus that less and less respect for old people is being shown. It is pointed out that many children now address their grandparents in the familiar *tú* and that some of the old customs of greeting elders, such as the kissing of the hand, have fallen into disuse. In addition to the disappearance of outward signs of respect, there are more sources of conflict between the older and younger 178 888 195 576

¹ Approximately fifteen per cent of the population of Tepoztlán is over age fifty. Tepoztlán has a higher proportion of old people than does rural Mexico as a whole. At the time of this study, the oldest person in the village was ninety-nine.

² Of the forty-five individuals who live alone, the majority are over sixty years of age. [162]